

Are you a landowner within the Green River CREP Region? If so, and you are interested in what this lucrative program can do for you, please see the following information:

What is your contribution?

The installation of BMPs (best management practices) is the goal of this program to achieve the desired protection of farmland, wildlife habitat, and water quality. There are several practices that may be utilized within CREP, which often involve the planting of native warm season grasses, trees, or both. There is also a practice in which cool season grasses may be planted. Any land adjacent to creeks or streams (including seasonal streams) that can be categorized as marginal pastureland or cropland may be eligible. In addition, upland fields with required cropping history and that meet USDA erodibility standards may also be eligible.

Remember, the “Enhanced” part of this program is primarily financial, thus benefiting the landowner that chooses to enroll. Federal, state, and non-profit organizations joined together to ensure that incentives (bonuses) were added, that cost share rates were increased to lessen burden on the producer, and that annual rental rates were increased to (for some practices) double that of what they would be under the CRP. In addition, an *optional* easement is offered on top of the CREP contract to extend conservation stewardship.

Benefits to Farmers and Landowners:

- In nearly every real world example calculated within the region, more money can be made by enrolling land into CREP than by farming it.
- CREP income over the contracted 10-15 years does not depend on market prices, weather, or other factors that often influence our profession; it is a dependable and consistent income.
- The installation of these conservation practices is cost-shared by both the state and federal government, and there are additional bonus and/or incentive payments on most practices up front, thus the landowner actually makes money on the installation process.
- You choose what parts of your farm (that meet eligibility requirements) that you want to enroll...we can work with you to design buffers that work for everyone.

- Some of your more marginal farmland can be enrolled, thus you will still be making good money on land that is not the most productive, and more than likely should not be farmed.
- At the end of your contracts, you may choose to return to farming these lands if you so desire. For those who are interested in continuing to maintain good conservation practices on enrolled acreage, there is an *optional* easement that stays with the land permanently that will pay the landowner \$480/acre.
- There are a variety of practices, and choices within those practices, that should accommodate different landowners and situations.

Benefits to the land and water:

- Reduces soil erosion.
- Increases wildlife habitat.
- Protects creeks and rivers from runoff, increasing water quality.
- Assists aquatic wildlife habitat by providing needed shade on creeks and rivers on the riparian buffer zones.
- Protection of sinkholes will help our groundwater quality, and assist in the quality of the environment of cave wildlife.
- Benefits the soil by replenishing depleted organic matter and nutrients.
- In the long term, will help with flood events along creeks and streams.

Our Most Recent Success Story:

From June through September of 2004, Adair County, Kentucky, enrolled 1,012 acres into the Green River CREP. The enrollment of this acreage alone will bring more than \$2 million to Adair County landowners over the life of these contracts. As a result of this tremendous effort, more and more farmers in Adair County are becoming interested in this lucrative conservation program. Terry Partin, Adair County CED with USDA Farm Service Agency stated,

“We have been tremendously successful in both improving conservation and bringing needed capital into our community while not affecting the agricultural base here in Adair County”

In the case of CREP, the marginal areas of farms are buffered, and the best production ground may continue to be used as farmland...thus the USDA coined term:

“Farm the best and buffer the rest”



Stream Crossing in Barren County



Water Facility in Taylor County

The above photos were taken on CREP contracted acreage, and the program provided cost share funding for the installation of these facilities. Since one of the primary objectives of CREP is to keep livestock out of waterways to improve water quality, cost share funding is available (for those that meet eligibility requirements) for several practices such as livestock watering facilities, fencing, stream crossings, limited access points, etc. Note that in the stream crossing photo, you can see the cost shared crossing (geo-tiled), fencing, and the actual planted CREP riparian buffer to the left of the fence across the stream. Beyond the end the graveled access road, green fescue pasture is still available for livestock.



Hart County CREP Native Grass Planting



Taylor County Tree Planting Demonstration



Adair County CREP Producer Meeting



CREP Native Grass Planting